

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST



Translated from the French
of Madame de Beaumont
and illustrated by Diane Goode

The haunting tale of the kind-hearted girl who consents to die to save her father's life, and of the beast whose own kind-heartedness wins over the girl, is here given a sumptuous setting appropriate for magic — and for dreaming. The beast, an enormous lion-like creature, reveals his human heritage most expressively, but never, until the miracle at the end of the story, loses his fearsomeness.

Diane Goode has translated her text from the original French of Madame Leprince de Beaumont, and graced it with her most mysterious and powerful paintings.

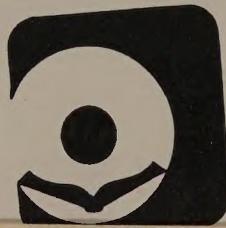


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Beaumont

Beauty and the beast;
illus. by Diane Goode

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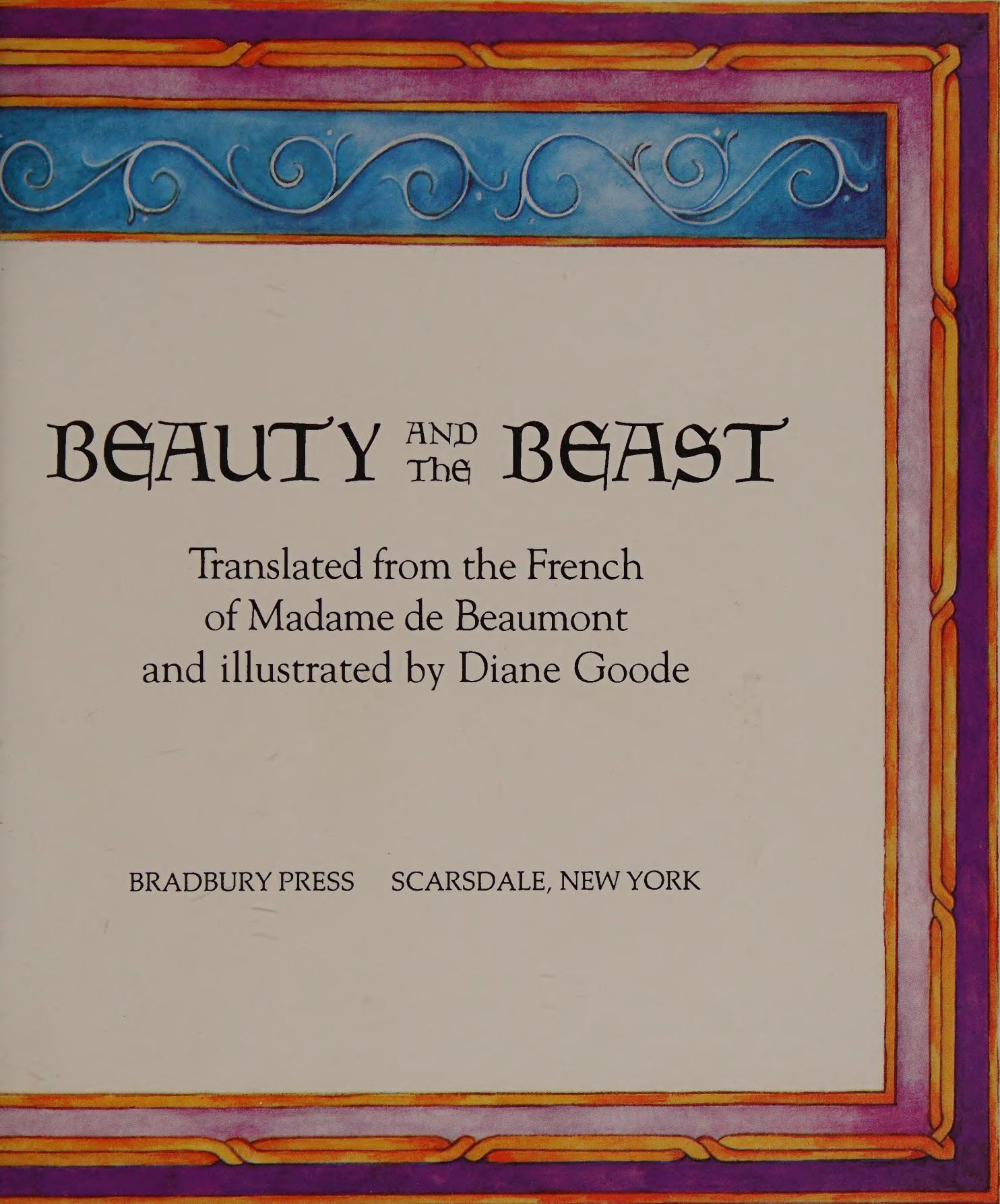


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BRADBURY PRESS SCARSDALE, NEW YORK

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The text of this book is set in 14pt. Goudy Old Style. The artist painted the pictures in water colors, using brushes on parchment. The illustrations are reproduced in full color.

À mon Grand-père, François Guerrini
Affectueusement, Diane





NCE UPON A TIME THERE LIVED a merchant who was extremely rich. He had six children, three sons and three daughters. And since he was a sensible man, he spared no expense upon their education, but gave them all kinds of tutors. His daughters were very beautiful, but the youngest was especially

admired by everybody. When she was little she was known as *the beautiful child*, and this name remained with her, causing her sisters to be very jealous.

Beauty, as she came to be called, was not only prettier than her sisters, but she was also much nicer. The two older girls were very arrogant because of their wealth. They gave themselves ridiculous airs playing the great ladies, declining to receive the other merchants' daughters and associating only with aristocrats. Every day they went off to balls, to plays or for strolls, laughing at their little sister who spent most of her time reading good books.

Since the girls were known to be rich, they were sought in marriage by

many a well-to-do merchant. The two eldest said they would never marry unless they could find a duke, or at least a count. But Beauty thanked those who wished to marry her, and said that she was too young at present and that she wished to keep her father company for several years yet.

All of a sudden the merchant lost his wealth. Nothing remained to him but a small country house, very far from the city. Weeping, he told his children they must move to this house where, by working the land, they might just manage to live.

The two elder girls replied that they would not leave the city, for they had several suitors who would be happy to marry them, even though they had lost their fortunes. But the good ladies were mistaken. Now that they were poor, their suitors slighted them. They were loved by no one because of their arrogance. People declared that they did not deserve pity; in fact, everyone thought it was a good thing that their pride was humbled. "Let them play the great ladies while tending their sheep!" they said. At the same time, however, everybody added, "As for Beauty, we grieve for her misfortune, she is so kind."

There were several worthy gentlemen who would have married Beauty, though she had not a penny. But she told them she could not abandon her poor father and that she intended to follow him to the country, to comfort him and help him to work.

When they had settled in their country house, the merchant and his three sons started to till the land. Beauty rose at four o'clock every morning, and hurried to clean the house and prepare the family meals. At first, she found it very hard, for she was not accustomed to such work; but at the end of two months she grew stronger, and the hard toil gave her perfect health. When she had leisure, she read, played the harpsicord, or sang while she spun.

Her two sisters, on the other hand, were bored to death. They never rose before ten o'clock in the morning, and they strolled about all day, lamenting the loss of their beautiful clothes and their former acquaintances. "Look at our little sister," they said to each other. "Her soul is so base and so stupid that she is quite content with this miserable situation."



The good merchant did not share the opinion of his two daughters. He knew that Beauty was more suited to shine in society than her sisters. He admired the girl's virtue, especially her patience. As for her sisters, not content with letting her do all the work of the house, they insulted her at every opportunity.



The family had been living in seclusion for a year when the merchant received a letter informing him of the arrival of a ship on which he had some merchandise. The news nearly turned the heads of the two older girls, for they thought they might finally escape their dull life in the country. When they saw their father ready to leave the house, they begged him to bring them back dresses, furs, hats and all sorts of trinkets. Beauty asked for nothing, thinking to herself that all the money the merchandise might yield would never be enough to buy her sisters gifts.

"You have asked for nothing," said her father.

"You are so kind to think of me," she replied, "you might bring me a rose, for there are none here."

The good merchant set off. But when he arrived at his destination, he discovered there was a law suit over his merchandise. After much trouble, he started for home, poorer than he had been before. Only thirty miles from his house, as he was thinking with pleasure of seeing his children again, the merchant came to a great forest. It was snowing horribly and he lost his way. The wind was so strong that he was thrown twice from his horse. When night fell he thought he would either die of hunger and cold or else be eaten by wolves, which he could hear howling all around him.

Suddenly, through a long avenue of trees, he saw a light in the distance. He hastened toward it on foot and discovered a great castle, all lit; but he was astonished to find the courtyards deserted. His horse saw a large open stable and went in. Finding hay and oats in readiness, the poor animal, who was nearly dying of hunger, ate eagerly. The merchant tied him in the stable, and walked toward the house. There was not a soul to be seen. He





entered a large hall where he found a roaring fire and a table laden with meats, but the table was set only for one. The rain and snow had soaked him to the bone, so he drew near the fire to dry himself. "The master of this house or his servants will surely forgive the liberty I have taken," he thought, "and doubtless someone will be here soon."

He waited a considerable time; but eleven o'clock struck and still nobody came. No longer able to resist his hunger, he took some chicken and ate it in large mouthfuls, trembling. Then he drank several glasses of wine, and becoming bolder, left the hall and passed through many magnificently furnished apartments until he came to a chamber which had a very good bed. As midnight had struck, and he was very tired, he closed the door, and went to sleep.

It was ten o'clock the next morning before he awoke, and he was greatly surprised to find a new suit of clothes in place of his own, which was quite spoiled. "Surely," he said to himself, "this castle must belong to some good fairy, who has taken pity on my misfortune."

He looked out the window. The snow had vanished and arbors of roses met his view. He returned to the great hall where he had supped the night before, and found a small table with a cup of chocolate on it.

"I thank you, Madam Fairy," he said aloud, "for having the goodness to think of my breakfast."

Having drunk his chocolate, the merchant went to look for his horse.

As he passed under an arbor of roses, he recalled that Beauty had asked for one, and he plucked a branch on which there were several blooms. At that very moment, he heard a dreadful noise, and he saw coming toward him a beast so horrible that he nearly fainted from fright.

"You are most ungrateful!" the monster said to him in a terrible voice. "I have saved your life by receiving you into my castle, and, in return, you steal my roses which I love better than all things in this world! For this offense you must die!"

The merchant threw himself on his knees and wrung his hands. "My lord, forgive me, I did not think to offend you by picking a rose for one of my daughters."





“I am not called ‘my lord’,” replied the monster, “but the Beast. I have no love for compliments, but prefer people to say what they think; therefore, do not try to move me with your flatteries. However, you have told me that you have daughters. I will forgive you on the condition that one of them comes of her own choice to die in your place. Don’t argue with me! Be gone. And if your daughter should refuse to die in your place, swear that you will return in three months.”

The good man had no intention of sacrificing one of his daughters to this vile monster; but he thought that at least he would have the pleasure of embracing them one more time. He swore to return, and the Beast told him he could go when he wished. “But,” he added, “do not leave empty-handed. Return to the chamber where you slept and there you will find an empty chest. Fill it with whatever you wish and I will send it to your home.”

The Beast withdrew, leaving the good man to reflect that if he must die, he would have the comfort of leaving something for his poor children.

The merchant returned to the chamber where he had slept. There he found a great quantity of gold coins and filled the chest the Beast had spoken of. He found his horse in the stable and set forth from the castle, as down-hearted now as he had been joyful when he entered.

The horse, of his own accord, took one of the forest roads, and in a few hours the good man arrived at his little house. His children gathered around him; but instead of welcoming their embraces, the merchant burst into tears. In his hand he held the branch of roses he had brought for Beauty, and he gave it to her saying, “Beauty, take these roses; it is dearly that I must pay for them.”

Thereupon he recounted his fatal adventure. The two older girls made a great fuss and shouted insults at Beauty, because she did not cry at all.

“It would be quite useless to weep,” Beauty said. “Why should I lament the death of my father? He shall not perish. Since the monster will accept one of his daughters, I will offer myself to his fury. I am very happy, for in doing so I shall save my father and prove my affection for him.”

“No, sister,” said her three brothers, “you will not die. We shall go and find this monster, and will perish under his blows if we cannot kill him.”

"Have no such hopes, my children," said their father. "The power of this Beast is so great that there is no escaping him. I am touched by Beauty's goodness, but I will not expose her to certain death. I am old and have not long to live. I shall lose but a few years."

"I assure you, father," said Beauty, "that you will not go to the castle without me; you cannot prevent me from following you. I would rather be devoured by this monster than die of the grief which your death would cause me." It was useless. Beauty was determined to leave for the great castle.

The merchant was so grieved by the thought of losing his daughter that he quite forgot the chest he had filled with gold. No sooner had he closed his chamber door and prepared for bed than, to his great surprise, he found it by his bedside! He decided not to tell his children that he had become so rich, for his elder daughters would have wanted to return to the city, and he had resolved to die in the country. He did, however, confide his secret to Beauty, who told him that during his absence several gentlemen had called and that two of them had courted her sisters. She begged her father to let them marry, for she was of such a kind nature and she loved them.

When Beauty set off with her father, her two sisters rubbed their eyes with an onion so as to appear tearful. The merchant and her brothers wept freely while Beauty held back her tears, so as not to add to their sorrow.

The horse set out on the road to the castle, and by evening Beauty and her father beheld it, all lit up as before. Their horse went unguided to the open stable, and the good man and the girl entered the great hall. There they found the table magnificently set for two people. The merchant had not the heart to eat, but Beauty, forcing herself to appear calm, sat down and served him. "The Beast must be anxious to fatten me up," she thought to herself, "since he has provided us with this splendid reception."

When they had finished supper, they heard a terrible noise. Knowing that it was the Beast, the merchant bid a tearful farewell to his poor daughter. Beauty could not help but tremble at the hideous apparition, but she did her best to calm herself.

"Have you come of your own free will?" the Beast asked.



“Yes” she replied softly.

“You are indeed kind,” said the Beast, “and I am much obliged. You, good man, will leave tomorrow morning. Never think of returning here again. Farewell, Beauty.”

“Farewell, Beast,” she answered, and immediately the monster withdrew.

Beauty and her father went to bed, thinking they would not sleep at all, but they had scarcely lain down when they fell sound asleep.

In her dreams there appeared to Beauty a lady who said to her, “Your virtuous heart pleases me, Beauty. In saving the life of your father, you have performed a good deed which shall not go unrewarded.”

When Beauty awoke, she told her father of her dream. He was somewhat consoled by it, yet wept bitterly when it came time for him to leave.

When he had gone, Beauty sat down in the great hall and cried too. She was certain the Beast would eat her that very evening, but regaining her courage, she decided to grieve no more during the short time she had to live.

She made up her mind to explore the splendid castle and was greatly surprised when she came upon a door, above which was written, “Beauty’s Room.” She hastened to open the door, and was dazzled by the magnificence within. What surprised her most was a large library, a harpsicord and several books of music. “They are anxious that I should not be bored,” she murmured. “If I had but one day to live, surely they would not have made such provisions for me.”

This idea gave her fresh courage. Opening the bookcase, she removed a book and read these words, written in golden letters:

“Your wish is my command, you are mistress of all here.”

“Alas!” she sighed, “I wish only to see my poor father.”

Saying this, she glanced at a great mirror and saw her own home, where her father was just arriving. He looked down-cast as her brothers and sisters went to meet him. The joy the ladies felt at the loss of their sister was only too obvious. In an instant the vision faded. Beauty could not help but think that the Beast had been very kind, and that she had nothing more to fear from him.



At noon, she found the table set, and during her dinner she heard an excellent concert, though she saw no one. But in the evening, as she was about to sit down at the table, she heard the terrible noise the Beast made, and trembled in spite of herself.

“Beauty,” said the monster, “may I watch you eat your supper?”

“You are master here,” Beauty said, quaking.

“No,” replied the Beast. “You alone are mistress here. You have but to tell me to leave. If my presence disturbs you, I shall go immediately. Tell me, do you not find me very ugly?”

“I do,” said Beauty, “since I must be truthful; but I think you are also very kind.”

“You are right that I am ugly,” said the Beast; “and besides my ugliness, I have no wit. I know very well that I am but a fool.”

“A fool,” answered Beauty, “is not aware he lacks wit; a fool never realizes it.”

“Sup well, Beauty,” the Beast said. “And try to amuse yourself in your castle, for everything here is yours. I should be sorry to know you were unhappy.”

“You are very generous,” said Beauty. “I am well pleased with your kind heart; when I think of that, you no longer seem so ugly to me.”

“Oh yes,” answered the Beast, “my heart is good, but I am a monster.”

“There are many men more monstrous than you,” said Beauty, “and I prefer your form to those men who hide a false, corrupt and ungrateful heart.”

“Had I wit enough,” said the Beast, “I would make a fine compliment to thank you; but being so stupid, I can only say that I am most grateful.”

Beauty ate well, her fear of the Beast nearly gone. But she nearly died of fright when he asked her:

“Beauty, will you be my wife?”

She waited for some time before replying, fearing her refusal would anger him. At last she said, “No, Beast!”

The poor monster sighed a sigh which hissed frightfully, the sound echoing through the castle walls. But Beauty was reassured when he said,



“Farewell, then, Beauty,” and took his leave from the hall, though turning from time to time to look at her. Alone, Beauty felt touched by this poor Beast. “What a pity he is so ugly,” she thought, “for he is so good.”

Beauty spent three quiet months living in the castle. Every evening, the Beast paid her a visit, entertaining her with much good sense, but never with what one might call wit. Every day, Beauty discovered some new kindness in the monster. Seeing him so often she became accustomed to his ugliness, and far from dreading the moment of his visit, she would glance frequently at the clock to see if it was nine o’clock, for the Beast never failed to appear at that hour.

Only one thing troubled Beauty. Each evening, before retiring, the Beast always asked her to be his wife, and seemed overcome by grief when she refused. One day she said to him:

“You distress me, Beast. I wish I could marry you, but I cannot allow you to hope that will ever be. I will always be your friend. Be content with that.”

“I must,” said the Beast. “I know I am very horrible, but I love you very much. I should be happy knowing you will stay here. Promise you will never leave me.”

Beauty blushed at these words. She had seen in her mirror that her father was sick with grief at having lost her, and she wished to see him once again. “I would gladly promise never to leave you; but I have so great a desire to see my father that I should die of sorrow if you should refuse me.”

“I would rather die myself than cause you grief,” said the monster. “I will send you to your father. You will remain with him, and your Beast will die of sorrow.”

“No,” said Beauty, crying, “I am too fond of you to cause your death. I promise to return in eight days. You have shown me that my sisters are married and my brothers have joined the army. My father is lonely; let me stay with him for one week.”

“You shall be there tomorrow morning,” said the Beast. “But remember your promise. When you wish to return you have only to lay your ring on a table before you go to bed. Farewell, Beauty.”

As usual, the Beast sighed as he said these words, and Beauty went to bed quite sad for having grieved him.



When she awoke the next morning, she found herself in her father's house. She rang the little bell at her bedside, and it was answered by a maid, who gave a great cry at seeing her. Hearing the noise, Beauty's father came running and nearly died with the joy of seeing his daughter again. Their embraces lasted for more than a quarter of an hour. When their joy had subsided, Beauty realized she had no clothes to wear; but the maid told her that she had just discovered a great chest filled with gold dresses, studded with diamonds. Beauty was grateful to the good Beast for his attention. She selected the plainest of the gowns and told the maid to pack up the others, so she might send them as presents to her sisters. She had hardly finished speaking when the chest disappeared. Her father told her that he thought the Beast must wish her to keep them all for herself, and in an instant, dresses and chest returned to where they had just been.

While Beauty was dressing, she learned that her sisters had been summoned and had arrived with their husbands. Both were very miserable. The eldest had married a most handsome gentleman, but he was so in love with his own good looks that he admired himself from morning 'til night. The second married a man of wit, but he used it only to insult everybody, his wife first and foremost. The sisters were sick with envy when they saw their sister dressed like a princess, more beautiful than the dawn. In spite of her caresses, they could not hide their envy, and it grew worse when she told them how happy she was. The jealous pair descended into the garden weeping bitterly.

"Why should this little creature be happier than we are? Are we not more agreeable than she?"

"Sister," said the elder, "I have a plan. Let us try to detain her longer than the eight days. Her stupid Beast will be so enraged at her for having broken her word, that he will very likely devour her."



"You are right, sister," said the other. "Therefore, we must show her as much kindness as possible if we wish the plan to succeed."

Having decided on this plot, they returned to the house and made a great fuss over Beauty. When the eight days had passed, the two sisters tore their hair and made such a dreadful scene at her departure that she promised to remain eight more days with them.

At the same time, Beauty reproached herself for the grief she was causing her poor Beast, whom she cared for with all her heart. She longed to see him again. On the tenth night of her stay in her father's house, she dreamed she was in the castle garden, where she saw the Beast lying on the grass, nearly dead, reproaching her for her ingratitude. Beauty woke with a start, and burst into tears.

"Am I not very wicked to cause so much grief to a Beast who has shown me so much kindness? Is it his fault that he is so ugly, and has so little wit? He is good, and that is worth more than the rest. Why did I not wish to marry him? I should be happier with him than my sisters are with their husbands. It is neither beauty nor wit in a husband that makes a woman happy; it is goodness of character, virtue, kindness; and the Beast has all of these qualities. It is true that I do not love him; but he has my esteem, friendship and respect. I must not make him miserable or I shall regret it all my life."

With these words, Beauty lay her ring on the table. No sooner had she returned to her bed than she was fast asleep. When she awoke the next morning she saw with joy that she was in the Beast's castle. She dressed in her very best to please him, and nearly died of impatience the entire day, waiting for nine o'clock that evening. When the hour struck the Beast did not appear. Fearing she had caused his death, Beauty ran throughout the castle in despair. She searched everywhere for him. At last, recalling her dream, she ran to the garden near the canal. There she found the poor Beast unconscious. Thinking him dead, and forgetting her horror, she threw herself on his body. Finding his heart still beating, she took some water from the canal and poured it on his face.

The beast opened his eyes.





"You forgot your promise," he whispered. "The grief I felt at your loss made me resolve to die of hunger; but I die content since I have the pleasure of seeing you again."

"No, my Beast, you shall not die," said Beauty. "Live and be my husband. From this moment, I give you my hand and swear to be yours alone. Alas, I thought I felt only friendship for you, but the grief I feel convinces me that I cannot live without you."

Beauty had scarcely pronounced these words when the castle suddenly sparkled with lights. Fireworks, music — everything proclaimed a great event; but all these splendors were lost on her. She turned toward her dear Beast, still trembling for his danger. What a surprise she had! The Beast had vanished, and she saw at her feet a prince, who thanked her for having ended his enchantment. Though this prince commanded her full attention, she could not keep from asking what had become of the Beast.

"You see him at your feet," said the prince. "An evil fairy condemned me to retain that form until a beautiful girl should consent to marry me, and she forbade me to betray any sign of wit. In the whole world, only you were generous enough to be moved by the goodness of my character. In offering you my crown, I cannot discharge the obligation I owe you."

Beauty, happily surprised, gave her hand to the prince and helped him rise. Together they went to the castle, and Beauty was overjoyed to find that her father and all her family had been brought to the great hall by the beautiful lady in her dream.

"Beauty," said this lady, who was a fairy, "come and receive the reward of your noble choice. You preferred virtue to beauty and wit and you surely deserve to find all these qualities in one person. You shall become a great queen. I hope that the throne will not diminish your virtues. As for you, ladies," she said to Beauty's two sisters, "I know your hearts and the malice they contain. You shall become two statues, retaining all your feelings under the stone which envelops you. You shall stand before the gates of your sister's castle, for I can think of no greater punishment than for you to witness her happiness. You shall not return to your former state until you recognize your faults. But I fear that you shall remain statues forever."





With a tap of her wand, they were all transported to the prince's kingdom, where his subjects received him joyfully. The prince married Beauty and they lived together in happiness for a very long time.







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